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NEW CLAIMS SUBMITTED BY THE APPLICANT

11. (new) An apparatus for opening containers with screw-off lids, the apparatus comprising :

a lid-wedging plate held by one hand on the lid to be unscrewed, the lid-wedging plate having on the plate's under surface, two walls, at right angles to the plate, and mounted to face each other at an angle to one another, respectively;

a connecting arm having a first end pivotally attached to the plate and a second free end, the plate further comprising an axle at a right angle to the plate;

the free end of the connecting arm further comprising : a winding drum ; a handle operably connected to the winding drum; and, a flexible ribbon forming a loop to encircle the container and mounted to the winding drum, said loop being closed where it is mounted on the winding drum, such that the flexible ribbon is wound up around the drum as it is rotated by the handle while the drum turns on an axle that is at a right angle to the plate at the free end of the connecting arm, where the rotation of the handle causes self-wedging of the lid under the plate as the flexible ribbon tightens around the container below the lid at the level of the necking just below its screw threads.

12 (new) The apparatus of claim 11, wherein at least one of the walls is adjustable to vary the spread between the walls to fit various diameters of lids.

13. (cancelled) The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the flexible ribbon is made of reinforced rubber.

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14. (new) The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the lid-wedging plate further comprises an opening between the walls to allow the winding drum to move closer to small-diameter containers in order to rotate them.

15. (new) The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the first end of the connecting arm has an oblong slot, such that the distance between the axle of the connecting arm on the lid-wedging plate and the drum's axle can be variable by allowing the connecting arm to travel along the oblong slot.

16. (new) The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the connecting arm is divided into at least two segments joined to form an elbow joint in the plane of the lid-wedging plate.

17. (new) The apparatus of claim 16, further comprising a coil spring mounted between the second segment and the lid-wedging plate such that the second segment of the connecting arm is biased to return to a starting position.

18. (new) The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the connecting arm is divided into at least two segments joined to form an elbow joint in the plane of the lid-wedging plate.

19. (new) The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the free end of the connecting arm further includes an upper and a lower end of the forming drum.

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20. (new) The apparatus of claim 11, further comprising a coil spring mounted between the connecting arm and the lid-wedging plate such that the connecting arm is biased to return to a starting position.

21. (new) The apparatus of claim 11, further comprising a stop to prevent excessive return rotation of the handle, the stop being integrally mounted to the lid-wedging plate or the connecting arm.